

# IRS News Release

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## **IRS and AICPA Announce Agreement to Assist Disaster Victims**

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WASHINGTON – The Internal Revenue Service announced today that it will partner with the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) to provide assistance to taxpayers at local disaster recovery centers established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). To that end, the IRS and AICPA have signed an agreement.

The CPA volunteers will soon join IRS employees to staff disaster recovery centers servicing some of the areas affected by Hurricane Katrina.

“With so many American lives disrupted by Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath, the ability to expand service by using CPA volunteers should help reduce some of the tax issues victims will face,” said IRS Commissioner Mark W. Everson. “These volunteers will provide the technical expertise and skills necessary to explain the laws regarding disaster-related tax relief.”

When the President designates an area to receive federal disaster assistance, FEMA opens local disaster recovery centers where individuals and businesses may register for disaster aid. IRS assigns employees to staff these local centers to provide tax assistance to taxpayers. Occasionally, IRS must augment its capacity to staff these centers.

Under the terms of the partnership agreement, the IRS and the AICPA will test the use of volunteer CPAs at FEMA’s disaster recovery centers to facilitate service to those seeking aid. The IRS will request support from the profession to supplement staff on an as-needed basis.

Both IRS and the AICPA will work with CPA volunteers at FEMA disaster recovery centers in Presidentially-declared disasters to reach more taxpayers and inform them of the services offered.

“CPAs are working in the public interest to help Americans with their financial recovery from major disasters such as Hurricane Katrina,” said Barry Melancon, AICPA President and CEO. “Many CPAs have already established themselves as essential members of the

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communities in which they live. With this program, they can meet a critical need for Americans who have turned to FEMA shelters for help and comfort. There are so many decisions to be made once disaster strikes and the CPA community has come together to help make that process as smooth as possible.”

The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants is the national, professional organization for certified public accountants. Its mission is to provide members with the resources, information and leadership that enable them to provide quality services to benefit the public as well as employers and clients.

“The IRS would like to thank the AICPA for its willingness to partner and provide assistance to those Americans in their greatest time of need. We will continually look to find new ways and opportunities to strengthen our partnership with the AICPA to serve the American public,” Everson said.

Information regarding disaster tax relief may be found on the IRS’s Web site at *IRS.gov*.